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Aims of Hitler's Foreign Policy

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INTRODUCTION

ON March 16, 1935 the German Leader and Chancellor, Adolf Hitler, who on March 11 had already proclaimed the existence of a German air force, announced the promulgation of a law reintroducing universal military service and providing that the new German army will comprise twelve corps and thirty-six divisions.¹ This new army will total between 550,000 and 600,000 men as compared with the pre-war imperial army of 870,000, and Hitler's action is in direct violation of the military clauses of the Versailles treaty.

The conscription law was accompanied by a proclamation to the German people explaining and justifying this move. In it Hitler stated that the German people had offered "honorable resistance in a war whose outbreak they had never desired," and had disarmed in the belief that they thereby "rendered a service not only to tormented humanity" but also to the idea of general disarmament. The Reich, he declared, had fulfilled the military provisions of the Versailles treaty with "unexampled faithfulness," merely to find that the other signatories had not only failed to disarm, but had increased and perfected their armaments, leaving Germany defenseless "in a vacuum at the mercy of every threatening danger." The Reich had nevertheless participated in international disarmament negotiations until convinced that the equality solemnly promised to the German people could never be realized by this method. Even after leaving Geneva, Germany was still ready to examine proposals and make practical suggestions. Since no positive results had been achieved, however, the Reich felt justified in its conclusion that the other signatories to the Versailles treaty were no longer inclined to fulfill the disarmament provisions of that treaty.

1. Text of the "Law for the Building up of a Defense Force," and of Hitler's proclamation to the German people, *Volkskischer Beobachter*, extra edition, March 16, 1935; *New York Times*, March 17, 1935.

The German government consequently "saw itself compelled of its own accord to take those necessary measures which could insure the end of a condition of impotent defenselessness of a great people and Reich, which was as unworthy as in the last analysis it was menacing." The Nazi government considered it impossible "to refrain any longer from taking the necessary measures for the security of the Reich or even to hide the knowledge thereof from the other nations." What the Nazis want, according to Hitler, is to "make sure that Germany possesses sufficient instruments of power not only to maintain the integrity of the German Reich but also to command international respect and value as co-guarantor of general peace." Germany, he declared, is determined "never to proceed beyond the safeguarding of German honor and freedom of the Reich," and has no intention of creating an instrument of aggression.

The German contention that the other signatories of the Versailles treaty have not fulfilled their obligations to disarm and that the Reich is therefore justified in disregarding the military, naval and air clauses of Versailles (Part V) is based on statements made in the treaty itself as well as in the official Allied commentary on that instrument. The preamble to Part V of the treaty declares that German disarmament must be undertaken "in order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of armaments of all nations." This promise was reiterated in the official reply of the Allied and Associated powers to the observations of the German delegation on the conditions of peace. Moreover, the League Covenant forming Part I of the Versailles treaty pledges the members of the League to "reduction of armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety." Whether or not these pledges constituted a legal promise on the part of the Allies, they were so regarded by Germany and used as the basis of the German claim for "equality." That the Allies also recognized the

moral justification of this claim is shown in the Five Power Declaration of December 11, 1932—made before Hitler came to power—in which the United States, Great Britain, France and Italy recognized the principle of arms equality in a system of security.

Ever since 1919 disarmament negotiations had been hampered, if not completely frustrated, by the struggle for political security and the desire of France and the new states in Europe to preserve the territorial *status quo* established by the peace treaties. With the passage of time, however, a growing body of world opinion had become convinced that Germany could not be kept indefinitely in a position of inferiority and that eventually even the question of territorial revision would have to be faced. Meanwhile, some of the most onerous provisions of the Versailles treaty had in fact been revised or tacitly cancelled.² These modifications of the Versailles settlement, including formal recognition of the principle of German arms equality "in a system of security," had been won by governments of the Weimar Republic. Yet considerable sections of the German people, largely as a result of growing Nazi propaganda, felt that the Reich remained an enslaved nation bereft of national honor. The Nazis did not allow them to forget that the Versailles "dictate" had specifically laid responsibility for the World War on Germany or that the Reich's colonies had been taken away on the ground of German maladministration. Above all, failure to grant Germany equality in arms rankled as a sign of continued inferiority to other great powers.

HITLER AND EUROPE

The Nazi revolution in the first half of 1933, accompanied by terror and persecution of Jews, liberals, Marxists and pacifists, and by an outburst of intense nationalist fervor, shook Europe to its depths. The Germany of Weimar to which the former Allies had slowly and grudgingly made some concessions—always too late to satisfy growing German nationalism—had been swept away over night. In his "peace speech" on May 17, 1933 Chancellor Hitler, while stating that he had renounced all thought of war, charged that the Versailles treaty was designed to perpetuate "the disqualification of a great people to a second-class nation." Nazi leaders told the German people in innumerable orations and articles that the representatives of the national revolution are men and soldiers who are warriors. The Nazi government, however, continued to participate in the Geneva disarmament deliberations until October 1933, when Hitler suddenly recalled the German delegation and

2. Cf. p. 83.

announced the Reich's withdrawal from the League and the disarmament conference. Germany had served notice that it no longer thought it possible to attain equality through Geneva.

Even before the Reich's resignation from the League, there had been numerous reports of secret German rearmament. After October 1933 it became increasingly apparent that the Nazis were rearming on a large scale despite consistent denials to the contrary—a development which profoundly affected Europe's diplomatic alignments.³ By the end of 1934 it was evident that German rearmament, although still not officially admitted in Berlin, must be regarded as a *fait accompli*, and France and Great Britain initiated steps to bring the Reich into a collective system for European security. The joint communiqué issued in London on February 3, 1935 by the two powers declared that "nothing could contribute more to the restoration of confidence and the prospects of peace among nations than a general settlement freely negotiated between Germany and the other powers."⁴

Chancellor Hitler replied to the London proposals on February 14, "welcoming the suggestion" of an air pact but ignoring the other projects proposed in the communiqué which formed an indivisible whole. On February 22, however, the British were informed that Hitler was willing to discuss the entire European situation. Arrangements were then completed for a visit by the British Foreign Secretary, Sir John Simon, to Berlin on March 7. This plan was upset by publication on March 4 of a British White Paper preliminary to a debate in the House of Commons on imperial defense, which stated that in view of armament preparations in other countries, notably Germany, Great Britain was forced to increase its army, navy and air forces.⁵

Publication of this document was received in the Reich as an unwarranted insult and a recrudescence of the "Versailles spirit," directly contradicting the implicit recognition of Germany's right to arms equality contained in the February 3 communiqué. On March 5 Chancellor Hitler, pleading illness, postponed Sir John Simon's Berlin visit.

On March 16 Hitler suddenly returned to Berlin and proclaimed the introduction of universal military service in the Reich. After a mild protest, Sir John Simon announced that he would pay his

3. Vera Micheles Dean, "Toward a New Balance of Power in Europe," *Foreign Policy Reports*, May 9, 1934.

4. The reaction of European countries to German rearmament will be discussed in "Europe's Struggle for Security," by Vera Micheles Dean, a forthcoming issue of *Foreign Policy Reports*, to be published June 19, 1935.

5. Great Britain, *Statement Relating to Defence issued in connection with the House of Commons Debate on March 11, 1935*, Cmd. 4827 (London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1935).

postponed visit to Berlin on March 25. France and Italy, however, which feared that Hitler would attempt to drive a wedge between Britain and its World War Allies, obtained assurance that the Berlin conversations would be merely "exploratory" in character.

The British Foreign Secretary, accompanied by Mr. Anthony Eden, Lord Privy Seal, spent March 25 and 26 in Berlin discussing with Chancellor Hitler the general European situation and the projected pacts set forth in the London communiqué of February 3. In his first brief statement to the House of Commons on March 28, Sir John reported that "considerable divergence of opinion between the two governments was revealed by the conversations."⁶ Subsequently, the Foreign Secretary stated in the House that Chancellor Hitler had refused to participate in an Eastern mutual assistance pact, and in particular was not willing to conclude such a pact with the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the Reich favored non-aggression pacts between powers interested in Eastern European questions, although under "present conditions" Hitler was not prepared to contemplate the inclusion of Lithuania in any such pact. He also suggested that if hostilities should break out between any two contracting powers, the others should engage not to support the aggressor in any way, but pointed out the difficulty of determining the aggressor.

According to Sir John Simon, the German government did not reject in principle the idea of a Central European pact guaranteeing Austrian independence, but failed to see the necessity for such an agreement and anticipated great difficulty in defining "non-interference" with relation to Austria. Regarding armaments, Hitler stated that Germany required thirty-six divisions, representing a maximum of 550,000 soldiers. He declared that the Reich must have all types of arms possessed by other countries and was not prepared to stop construction of certain types as long as other states possessed them. In naval armaments Germany claimed the need of a fleet comprising 35 per cent of British tonnage; and in the air the Reich demanded parity with Great Britain and France, "provided that the Soviet air force was not such that revision of these figures would become necessary." Germany, however, would be prepared to accept a system of permanent and automatic arms supervision applying equally to all powers, if any general agreement as to arms limitation could be reached. Hitler made it perfectly clear to Sir John

6. Great Britain, House of Commons, *Parliamentary Debates*, March 28, 1935 (London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1935), p. 2081 *et seq.*

Simon that Germany would not return to the League of Nations except on a basis of complete equality, and stated as an example that the Reich was in a position of inferiority as long as it had no colonies.⁷

From the guarded report of the British Foreign Secretary, it would appear that Hitler has not relinquished his claims to Austria and Memel; that the question of Germany's return to Geneva is a matter of prestige; and that the Leader endeavored to use the "Soviet menace to international peace" in much the same manner that he made use of the alleged Communist menace within Germany to gain support for the Nazis. Unofficial reports of the Berlin conversations indicate that Hitler emphasized throughout that the Soviet Union constitutes the greatest single menace to European peace and that the Third Reich regards itself as a bulwark against communism.⁸

Despite Hitler's peace protestations, the net result of his talks with Sir John Simon seems to have been disquieting rather than reassuring. This impression was strengthened when a month after Sir John's return from Berlin the naval department of the German Ministry of Defense admitted that orders had been given to build twelve submarines. Apparently the British Foreign Secretary had received no intimation from Hitler that such a move was contemplated, and the news was received in Britain with surprise. It offered added proof that the proclamation of a conscript army on March 16 constituted a general resumption by the Reich of untrammelled military sovereignty in all fields.⁹

HITLER AND PEACE

Hitler's Reichstag speech on May 21, 1935, defending his policies against foreign criticism, was conciliatory in tone and reaffirmed the Leader's sincere desire for peace at the present time. In the thirteen points summarizing his foreign policy, the Leader pointed out that the Reich had repudiated only the Versailles military clauses, and solemnly promised to respect unconditionally all other articles of the treaty including its territorial provisions, and to seek revision only through peaceful means. Hitler, moreover, categorically pledged fulfillment of the Locarno pacts "as long as the other signatories uphold them," declaring that "the German government views its consequent respect for the demilitarized Rhineland zone as a contribution to European pacification regardless of the fact that it is a burden on a sovereign state." Concerning

7. *Ibid.*, April 9, 1935, p. 983 *et seq.*

8. *New York Times*, March 26, 27, 1935.

9. *The Times* (London), April 29, 1935; *Parliamentary Debates*, cited, April 29, 1935, p. 33 *et seq.*

German rearmament, he stated that the Reich had announced the size of the new German army and would never yield on that matter, although it is always ready to agree to all arms limitations accepted by other powers. The German air force must be equal in size to that of the individual great powers in the West, and the Reich accepts the London proposal for a western air Locarno. The German navy will be fixed at 35 per cent of the British fleet, thus approximating 85 per cent of the French, for "the Reich has not the intention or necessity or means to enter into naval rivalry." Germany is also willing to participate in all efforts for practical curtailment of arms and weapons of aggression including heavy artillery and tanks, although Hitler stated that the only practical means of achieving this end was a return to the idea of the old Geneva Red Cross convention which attempted to "civilize" war.

While thus reiterating the peaceful intentions of the Third Reich, Hitler's further statements regarding German cooperation in a system of collective security added little or nothing that was new. His speech was marked by bitter denunciation of the Soviet Union and Lithuania, where, he said: "140,000 Germans are deprived of the right of animals, that is, the right of faithfulness to an old master." Lithuania was specifically excepted by Hitler in his statement that Germany is ready to negotiate non-aggression pacts with individual neighbor states and to supplement such agreements with provisions for isolation of belligerents and localization of war areas. This offer of separate non-aggression pacts which included only Germany's neighbors—obviously excluding the U.S.S.R.—appears to be less far-reaching than the German proposals reported at the Stresa conference.^{2a} In explanation of the German refusal to join a multilateral Eastern Locarno arrangement to which Soviet Russia would be a party, Hitler declared that National Socialism cannot call citizens of Germany . . . to fight for the maintenance of a system [communism] which in our state manifests itself as our greatest enemy. Obligations for peace—yes! Bellicose assistance for Bolshevism we do not desire, nor would we be in a position to offer it."

Hitler's references to Austria also added nothing to what he had previously told Sir John Simon in Berlin. While disclaiming any intention of interfering in internal Austrian affairs or of annexing Austria, he declared that the German people and government "from a simple feeling of solidarity and common ancestry [have] the wish that not only to foreign peoples but also to German people shall be granted the right to self-determination. I do not

9a. Cf. Dean, "Europe's Struggle for Security," cited.

believe any régime not anchored in and by the people can be enduring."

In general it is clear from the Leader's statement that Germany wants peace at present, for "none of our practical plans will be completed for ten or twenty years to come." Hitler pointed out, moreover, that none of the "idealistic objectives" of National Socialism will reach fulfillment for fifty or perhaps a hundred years. Meanwhile, Germany still refuses to return to Geneva and join in a collective security system, although Hitler has not by any means closed the door on future international negotiations. His speech indicated that Germany is still attempting to win conservative support abroad by denouncing communism, drive a wedge between Great Britain and France, refrain from underwriting the *status quo* in Central Europe, and retain a free hand in the East.

Thus the immediate and ultimate aims of Hitler's foreign policy still form the crux of the European situation. They are the key to the possible use for which the new and fast growing German army, navy and air forces are designed. Does the Third Reich intend to build up a large military machine merely to defend itself and in order to attain equality with other countries—a status which to most Germans is a matter of national honor and prestige and the visible sign of a great power? Or does it intend eventually to use these forces for territorial expansion?

THEORY AND AIMS OF NAZI FOREIGN POLICY

The fundamental conceptions and principles of National Socialism are laid down in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, the bible of the Third Reich and an infallible guide to Nazi theory and practice. Large sections of this work deal with the Nazi concept of a racially "purified," highly centralized, totalitarian state, which seems to be not an end in itself but rather a means to attain the final goal—establishment of a racial (*völkisch*) state uniting "all Germans in a greater Germany,"¹⁰ whose territory is large enough to support and feed its population. The totalitarian state is now a reality in the Third Reich. Its organization under one supreme Leader with political power centralized in the Reich government, all opposition crushed, a great propaganda apparatus completely controlling the written and spoken word, and a concentration of economic power approximating state capitalism is an accomplished fact, and the process of racial "purification"

10. Point one of the Nazi program. Cf. Raymond Leslie Buell, ed., *New Governments of Europe* (New York, Nelson, 1934, 2nd ed.), p. 140; *Mein Kampf*, p. 439.

is well under way.¹¹ The set-up, when perfected, would lend itself admirably to prosecution of a war.

The totalitarian state, according to Nazi theory and practice, must be armed to the teeth. Military might is the *sine qua non* of Hitler's foreign policy as is evident on almost every page of *Mein Kampf*. Once completely armed, Germany will be able to form alliances with Britain and Italy, which are essential if it is to make full and leisurely preparation for the eventual reckoning with France.¹² "An alliance whose goal is not war," says Hitler, "is senseless and worthless."¹³ Meanwhile Hitler declares that Germany must concentrate upon destroying its worst enemies at home and abroad—the Jews.¹⁴

The chief objective of a rearmed, "purified" Germany, backed by allies, is to acquire sufficient territory for the German people and thus make the Reich a world power. "The aim of the foreign policy of the racial [völkisch] state must be to secure the existence on this planet of the race comprising this state. This entails creation of a healthy, viable, natural relationship between the number and increase of its population on the one hand and the size and fertility of its territory on the other hand." This healthy relationship is defined as a situation under which a people is able to feed itself entirely from its own land.¹⁵

Since the racial German state, comprising all Germans, requires sufficient territory, Hitler states that the demand for reestablishment of the Reich's 1914 frontiers is "political nonsense," for these frontiers have no meaning for the future of the German nation.¹⁶ He also condemns the imperial colonial policy which "did not add to the territory on which Germans could settle."¹⁷ On the contrary, the Third Reich demands territory which will enlarge the motherland, and Hitler states in this connection that "national frontiers are made by men and changed by men," although he admits that even to regain the 1914 frontiers bloodshed will be necessary.¹⁸ In one of the most passionate passages in *Mein Kampf*, Hitler declares: "Germany will either become a world power or completely cease to exist . . . We shall stop the eternal striving toward the south and west and turn our eyes to land in the

east . . . When we speak today of new territory in Europe, we can only think in the first instance of Russia and the border states [Randstaaten] under Russia's suzerainty." The fact that Bolshevik Russia is completely dominated and controlled by Jews—"a ferment of decomposition"—is viewed by Hitler as a fateful portent of destiny which will enable the Germans to expand eastward and at the same time give overwhelming proof of the eternal verity of Nazi racial theories. Thus "our task, the mission of the National Socialist movement, is to bring our own people to the political conviction that fulfillment of its future goal does not lie only in a new campaign of conquest but much more in the diligent work of the German plow for which the sword can only win the ground."¹⁹

If Hitler's *Mein Kampf* is the bible of the Third Reich, the writings on foreign policy of Alfred Rosenberg, head of the Foreign Political Bureau of the National Socialist party and editor of the party organ, the *Völkische Beobachter*, represent authoritative commentaries. Rosenberg's views on foreign policy underline and support those of the Leader. In his widely circulated pamphlet, *Der Zukunfts-weg einer deutschen Aussenpolitik*,²⁰ which forms part of official National Socialist literature, Rosenberg also presents the thesis that a German race of 100 million souls must have room (*Raum*) and territory (*Boden*)²¹ contiguous with the motherland.²² This territory lies, above all, in the east and "its acquisition furnishes the organic task of German foreign policy for centuries."²³ Like Hitler, Rosenberg believes the first step toward fulfillment of this goal is isolation of France by alliances with powers whose long-term interests run counter to those of the French, and relies on eventually securing Britain and Italy as Germany's allies.²⁴ Italian and German interests need never clash even though Germany and Austria are united—Rosenberg, like Hitler, takes *Anschluss* completely for granted.²⁵ The Reich must expand to the east and northeast while Italy will expand south and southeastward. Britain, once it has freed itself from the insidious influence of the Jews who rule the London City, must come into conflict with the Soviet Union over oil—a struggle in which it will have dire need of Germany's aid. The price of this assistance will be a free hand in the East for the Reich, which will eventually ruin the Soviet government by separa-

11. Mildred S. Wertheimer, "The Jews in the Third Reich"; "Political Structure of the Third Reich"; "Economic Structure of the Third Reich," *Foreign Policy Reports*, October 11, 1933, June 20, 1934, and September 26, 1934.

12. *Mein Kampf*, p. 700 *et seq.*

13. *Ibid.*, p. 749.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 702 *et seq.*

15. *Ibid.*, p. 728 *et seq.*

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 736, 738.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 730.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 738, 740.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 742 *et seq.*

20. Munich, Eher Verlag, 1927.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 39, 55.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

ing the Caucasus from the U.S.S.R. and freeing the Ukraine. Poland also will fall to Germany.²⁶

The future world set-up was described in detail by Rosenberg in a later work as follows:

"No *Mitteleuropa* without races and peoples . . . no Franco-Jewish Pan-Europa but a Nordic Europe: that is the solution of the future, with a German *Mittel-europa*. Germany as a racial and national state reaching from Strassburg through Memel and beyond; from Eupen through Prague and Laibach as the central power of the continent and as security for the south and southeast; the Scandinavian states with Finland as a second group to protect the northeast; and Great Britain as protector of the west and overseas in those sections where this is necessary in the interest of Nordic man."²⁷

It may be argued that the Hitler-Rosenberg conception of the ultimate goal of German—or at least Nazi—foreign policy is a wish-dream which was exploited primarily for propaganda purposes in the irresponsible days before the party came to power. Since then Hitler has made numerous peace speeches and held out the olive branch to France. The publications in which these older ideas are set forth, however, have neither been banned nor repudiated in the Third Reich. On the contrary, Hitler's *Mein Kampf* remains the standard Nazi source book, and Rosenberg's works are widely read. National Socialism, moreover, is regarded by its founders and leaders as a long-term philosophy of life which, as Hitler stated at the 1934 party convention in Nuremberg, will endure for a thousand years.²⁸ The Nazis will not necessarily attempt to carry out in the immediate future the entire foreign policy program as evolved by Hitler and Rosenberg.

Meanwhile, German youth is being taught a Nazi version of history designed to prepare the way for future expansion,²⁹ which is efficiently supplemented by the Nazi propaganda agencies who have presented the German schools with innumerable copies of a map showing the "German Frontier Districts in Distress."³⁰ This map reproduces faithfully the famous Pan-German ideal of union of all Germans which forms the basis of Nazi foreign policy. Thus it will be noted that no differentiation is made in the map between the German Reich proper and "German Austria." The terri-

26. *Ibid.*, p. 68 *et seq.*

27. Alfred Rosenberg, *Der Mythos des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts* (Munich, Hoheneichen Verlag, 1930), p. 602. Cf. map, p. 77.

28. Cf. Wertheimer, "Economic Structure of the Third Reich," cited.

29. Mildred S. Wertheimer, "Germany Under Hitler," *World Affairs Pamphlets* (New York, Foreign Policy Association and World Peace Foundation), February 1935.

30. Cf. p. 77.

tories lost by the latter as a result of the war are also listed as "German" frontier districts. The area inhabited by the German minority in Czechoslovakia is portrayed as a province severed from the Reich, although it formed part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and never belonged to the German Empire.³¹ The same applies to South Tyrol and other territories detached from Austria. The distinction made by the Nazi map-makers between "bordering German settled areas" and "Germanic neighboring peoples" is also illuminating. The former category includes German Switzerland, Luxembourg and Lichtenstein, none of which were part of imperial Germany. The latter classification is apparently intended to suggest the Nordic "racially related" peoples who in future might be prepared to follow Germany's leadership.

NAZI FOREIGN POLICY IN PRACTICE

The Nazis have not confined their efforts to education and propaganda in the Reich concerning the necessity of uniting all Germans in a greater Germany. On the contrary, National Socialist movements have developed among border Germans which, although described by Nazi leaders as "spontaneous," are reported to have received considerable financial support and direction from the Reich.³² Nor have these movements been limited to peoples which once formed part of the German Empire. The attempted Nazification of Austria is the most important endeavor yet made by Hitler to carry out the first step in his foreign policy program.

AUSTRIA

The Nazi struggle for Austria has kept Austro-German relations almost at the breaking point since the spring of 1933. After the murder of Chancellor Dollfuss on July 25, 1934 and the subsequent abortive Nazi *Putsch*, this policy brought Europe to the brink of war. To the German Nazis, Dr. Dollfuss and his Christian Socialist government represented the greatest obstacle to "coordination" of Austria with the Third Reich and thus to *Anschluss*. They had consequently concentrated their efforts on undermining and discrediting the Dollfuss régime by means of a virulent reign of terror which swept over Austria.³³ The chief in-

31. Article 82 of the Versailles treaty provided that "the old frontier as it existed on August 3, 1914 between Austria-Hungary and the German Empire will constitute the frontier between Germany and the Czechoslovak State."

32. F. L. Schuman, *The Nazi Dictatorship* (New York, Knopf, 1935), p. 352 *et seq.*

33. Mildred S. Wertheimer, "The Foreign Policy of the Third Reich," *Foreign Policy Reports*, March 28, 1934; *Das Braubuch: Hakenkreuz gegen Oesterreich* (Hrsg. vom Bundeskanzleramt, Vienna, Verlag der Oesterreich. Staatsdruckerei, 1933).

ciment came from the Munich radio station which constantly broadcast attacks on the Dollfuss government, assaulting it from every angle and calling on the Austrian people to overthrow the régime. German airplanes also flew over Austrian cities, dropping propaganda leaflets inciting to revolt against Dollfuss.³⁴

The international connotations of the Nazi drive to overthrow Dollfuss and coordinate Austria were emphasized by the rôle Italy played in the struggle. The Austrian Chancellor made frequent trips to Italy to confer with Mussolini and it was reported that close connections existed between Italy and the Austrian *Heimwehr*, led by Prince von Starhemberg. The price of Italian support in the battle for Austrian independence, however, was complete suppression of the Austrian Social Democratic party, which the Dollfuss government effected in February 1934 after several days of bloody civil war. Theo Habicht, Nazi "Inspector-General" for Austria, speaking over the Munich radio, forbade the Austrian Nazis to attack Dollfuss during this crisis. As a result, terrorism in Austria ceased abruptly, thus proving that it had originated entirely in Germany.³⁵

A new wave of terror, however, began in May 1934. Frequent bomb explosions occurred throughout the country, apparently to discourage foreign tourists and thus ruin one of Austria's chief industries. The explosives and infernal machines were smuggled into Austria from Germany, many of them bearing the stamp of the Reich Ministry of Defense.³⁶ In the Reich, close to the Bavarian-Austrian border, a so-called Austrian Legion composed of Nazis who had fled from Austria was encamped. It had been organized in the summer of 1933 and during the intervening period was given intensive military training by German *Reichswehr* officers and Storm Troop leaders. By July 1934 the Legion reportedly numbered some 15,000 men; as late as February 1, 1934, however, the German government had flatly denied the existence of such a body.³⁷

A lull in the terror occurred toward the middle of June 1934, coinciding with conversations between Chancellor Hitler and Premier Mussolini in Venice (Stra) on June 14-16, in the course of which the former apparently agreed that the in-

34. *Beiträge zur Vorgeschichte und Geschichte der Julirevolte*, Hrsg. auf Grund amtlicher Quellen (Vienna, Verlag der Bundeskommissariat für Heimatdienst, 1934), p. 27 et seq. Between July 5, 1933 and February 15, 1934 the Munich station broadcast 84 attacks on Dollfuss.

35. *Beiträge zur Vorgeschichte und Geschichte der Julirevolte*, cited, p. 12 et seq.

36. *Ibid.*, Appendix showing photographs of smuggled bombs, explosives, etc.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 30 et seq.

tegrity and independence of his native Austria should be maintained.³⁸ On June 30 Hitler's bloody purge of the Nazi party took place, shocking the whole world.³⁹

Three weeks after the Hitler purge, Chancellor Dollfuss was murdered in Vienna by Austrian Nazis. His assassination was followed by an attempted Nazi *Putsch* throughout the country. Italy, fearing consummation of Austro-German union should the *Putsch* succeed, immediately rushed two divisions of troops to the Brenner. The Nazi coup failed, however, partly because of lack of expected support from the army and the provinces. There is considerable evidence that the German Nazis were responsible for events in Austria. The Austrian government has published documents which seem to prove that the *Putsch* was planned and directed from German territory, and well-informed observers who were in Austria at the time are convinced of German complicity.⁴⁰ Moreover, on the morning of July 25—the *Putsch* did not start until 1 p.m.—the official German news agency (*Deutsches Nachrichten Büro*) issued instructions that the press must use only official German accounts of the news from Austria that day. In the evening the agency sent out a statement based on "official and private information" which was withdrawn half an hour later, when the German press was forbidden to publish it. This statement hailed the Austrian *Putsch*, declaring that "the German people in Austria have revolted against their jailers, torturers and oppressors . . . It is the whole Austrian people who have revolted. The triumph over the government of Dollfuss is being hailed by Germanism. This unlawful government, which opposed the peoples' will has been overthrown by the German people in Austria, a defeat as important as it is welcome . . . The new government will see to it that order is restored and that Pan-Germanism is given a home also in German-Austria."⁴¹ When this triumphant statement was issued in the Reich, the Austrian government had already been reorganized, and Dollfuss' murderers had surrendered.

Despite constant Nazi interference in Austrian affairs, Hitler hastened to wash his hands of Austria after the Dollfuss assassination. This was due partly to Austria's apparently unexpected resistance to the *Putsch* and partly to Mussolini's dispatch of troops to the Austro-Italian frontier. Hitler withdrew the German Minister to Austria, Dr. Rieth,

38. *The Times* (London), June 15, 16, 1934.

39. *Ibid.*, July 3, 1934.

40. Cf. *Beiträge zur Vorgeschichte und Geschichte der Julirevolte*, cited; John Gunther, "Policy by Murder," *Harpers*, November 1934 (report of an eyewitness).

41. *The Times* (London), July 30, 1934.

who had rashly acted as a witness for the safe conduct promised by the Austrian rump government to Dollfuss' murderers as far as the German border.⁴² The German Chancellor, moreover, announced that on the night of July 25 the Reich government had made a thorough investigation to determine whether any responsible German authority had been involved in the Austrian *Putsch*. The Austro-German frontier was closed, the Austrian legion in Bavaria was forbidden to leave its camps, and Hitler felt able to state that only one case of possible complicity had been discovered: Theo Habicht, Nazi "Inspector-General for Austria," had made a questionable announcement on the Munich radio regarding the *Putsch* and had been dismissed from his post at 10 a.m. on July 26.⁴³ This apparently referred to the report made on the evening of July 25 by the official press bureau and withdrawn half an hour later. Hitler also ousted Frauenfeld, the former Nazi

leader in Austria who had been operating from Munich, and steps were taken to remove the Austrian legion farther from the frontier. Former Vice-Chancellor von Papen—who had narrowly escaped death in the June 30 purge—was dispatched to Vienna as special Minister charged with reestablishing peaceful relations between the Reich and Austria. Europe remained unconvinced of the German Nazis' innocence, but *Anschluss* and war had been averted by Hitler's eleventh-hour attitude.⁴⁴

The Austrian government had meanwhile been reconstructed with Dr. Schuschnigg as Chancellor and Prince von Starhemberg, leader of the *Heimwehr*, as Vice-Chancellor. The latter, a reported monarchist, remains on excellent terms with Premier Mussolini. The new government tried many of the Nazi rebels, condemning and executing the ringleaders and imprisoning large numbers of the rank and file.⁴⁵

42. Cf. Gunther, "Policy by Murder," cited.

43. *Volkskischer Beobachter*, July 27, 1934.

44. Sidney B. Fay, "Dollfuss: Victim of Nazi Crime," *Current History*, September 1934.



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"German Frontier Districts in Distress"

Since the abortive *Putsch* in July 1934, the Nazis have been relatively quiescent in Austria, although the movement is far from dead. Nazi tactics have been altered, but their principles remain the same. There have been sporadic manifestations of open Nazi propaganda, and a few demonstrations were held after the German victory in the Saar plebiscite. The government, fearing a Nazi outburst, had taken extra precautions and no far-reaching disorder occurred. The economic distress of the Austrian peasantry, however, is reviving Nazi sympathies in many provinces. Nor is Nazi unrest the only threat to the Schuschnigg government. Large masses of Socialist workers feel that there is little choice between the present Fascist dictatorship and a Nazi régime. A number of members of the suppressed Socialist *Schutzbund* have been tried, found guilty of treason and sentenced to prison terms. This

45. *Current History*, October 1934; *ibid.*, February 1935. Up to December 1934 there were 246 trials in which 752 Nazis were accused. Of these 31 were sentenced to death, 13 of whom were hanged, 12 receiving commutation of sentences; 42 were sent to prison for life. The rest of the accused received sentences totaling 1,967 years' imprisonment.

has caused increased resentment, for the Socialists insist that they fought in February 1934 to defend the Austrian democratic Constitution against Fascism.⁴⁶ Chancellor Schuschnigg's principal support comes from the Catholic Christian Socialists and the *Heimwehr*; yet in many sections of the country these two factions are reported to be in conflict. A weak government in Austria is undoubtedly to the Nazis' eventual advantage; although the *Putsch* failed in July 1934, its after-effects may be more important in the final Naziification of Austria than its temporary failure indicated at the time.⁴⁷

THE SAAR

Despite their hatred of democracy and their establishment of a dictatorial government, the German Nazis have long demanded a "plebiscite" in Austria which, they contend, would demonstrate the overwhelming sentiment of the Austrian people for union with the Third Reich.⁴⁸ This demand became more outspoken as a result of the Saar plebiscite on January 13, 1935 when more than 90 per cent of the Saar voters cast their ballots in favor of return to Germany.⁴⁹ This plebiscite, for which provision was made in the Treaty of Versailles, was held under the direct supervision of the League of Nations. The Plebiscite Commission, appointed by the League Council, was assisted by an international police force recruited from Britain, Sweden, Italy and The Netherlands. The actual plebiscite passed off in orderly fashion, but was preceded by months of intensive Nazi propaganda and even terrorization.⁵⁰ The Saar vote, which demonstrated conclusively that the Saar population was German in sentiment, was interpreted by Hitler as a great victory for National Socialism, despite the fact that all pre-Nazi computations had anticipated at least a 95 per cent poll in favor of reunion with Germany. The fact that the Saar had formed an integral part of the Reich for a century, while other territories to which the Nazis lay claim, notably Austria, have never been politically united to Germany, has made no impression on Nazi advocates of a Pan-German state.

46. *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, April 26, 1935.

47. *New York Times*, April 28, 1935.

48. Cf. *Volkskischer Beobachter*, July 27, 1934.

49. Cf. League of Nations, *Monthly Summary*, January 1935. The result of the plebiscite was as follows: number of voters registered, 539,541; number of votes cast, 528,104; for the *status quo*, 46,613; for France, 2,124; for Germany, 479,119; invalid ballots, 905; blank ballots, 1,292.

50. For details of Nazi propaganda in the Saar, cf. J. C. deWilde, "The Future of the Saar," *Foreign Policy Reports*, January 2, 1935.

EUPEN-MALMEDY

Since the German victory in the Saar, there has been a recrudescence of Nazi activity in other frontier regions which were detached from the Reich by the Versailles treaty. On January 20, 1935 it was reported that propaganda was being widely spread in Eupen and Malmédy,⁵¹ inciting the population to demand reunion with Germany. Manifestoes appeared urging the population "to follow the example of the Saar. Return to the Fatherland." A number of alleged Nazi agitators were arrested by the Belgian police after a mass meeting of Eupen Hitlerites, and reports of terrorization in the enclaves, directed from Nazi headquarters at Aix-la-Chapelle across the German border, were current.⁵²

MEMEL

In the northeast also, the Saar vote has given a great impetus to the Nazi desire for "self-determination" of border Germans by means of plebiscites. The situation in Memel has become particularly threatening, and during the week after the Saar plebiscite it was reported that both Germany and Lithuania had mobilized troops near their frontier.

Memel comprises a small territory on the right bank of the Niemen river⁵³ which formed part of Prussia until it was detached from the Reich by the Versailles treaty (Article 99), apparently with the intention of providing an outlet to the sea for the newly established state of Lithuania.⁵⁴ The population of the port of Memel is entirely German and the agricultural hinterland is predominantly Lithuanian. While the Allies were deliberating as to the permanent disposition of Memel, Lithuania staged a coup in January 1923 and seized the territory. A final settlement was effected on May 8, 1924, when Lithuania signed a convention with Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan.⁵⁵ According to this convention and the annexed statute, the territory of Memel constitutes "under the sov-

51. The two enclaves of Eupen and Malmédy are situated on the Belgian-German frontier just south of Aix-la-Chapelle. Under the Versailles treaty Germany ceded these territories to Belgium, subject to demilitarization and a plebiscite. Germany protested to the League that the plebiscite in 1920 was unfairly conducted, but the League Council confirmed Belgium's title to the territory.

52. Cf. *New York Times*, January 17, 21, 1935; *Le Temps*, January 23, 1935.

53. See map, p. 77.

54. Cf. A. J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs, 1920-23* (London, Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 257 *et seq.*

55. Text of convention and statute in League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. 29, p. 85 *et seq.* Cf. also *Official Journal*, April 1924, Minutes of the Twenty-eighth Session of the Council, March 10-March 15, 1924, p. 598 *et seq.*

ereignty of Lithuania, a unit enjoying legislative, administrative and financial autonomy" organized on "democratic principles." It has a governor appointed by the President of Lithuania, a local Diet elected by "universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage," and executive power is exercised by a Directorate of not more than five men appointed by the governor but responsible to the Diet. These local authorities have jurisdiction over practically everything which concerns the territory except the judicial system, which is under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Lithuania. German and Lithuanian are recognized "on the same footing as official languages" and Lithuania is pledged to protect minorities in Memel.⁵⁶ Special annexes to the convention regulate the port of Memel and transit traffic through the territory. The statute of Memel is placed under the aegis of the League of Nations for, according to the convention, any member of the Council may draw the latter's attention to "any infraction" thereof. If a difference of opinion arises "in regard to questions of law or fact" between the Lithuanian government and the other signatories to the convention, such difference is to be regarded as having an international character subject to the jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice. Lithuania, furthermore, has agreed that all disputes of this kind "shall if the other party so requests," be referred to the Court from whose decision there is no appeal.

The Memel settlement has not worked out altogether satisfactorily, although for a period of about eight years the territory was relatively quiet. Germany, not being a party to the Memel Convention, has no direct juridical rights in the territory,⁵⁷ but as a member of the League Council is entitled to draw the attention of that body to any alleged infringements of the statute. The Reich has made frequent use of this right in order to protect the Memel Germans.⁵⁸

Rising nationalism in both Lithuania and Germany greatly aggravated the situation, and after Hitler's accession to power in the Reich, the Memellanders became very aggressive. In the middle of 1934 the governor of Memel—with the support of the Lithuanian government—ousted the German

56. League of Nations, *Official Journal*, June 1922, p. 586 *et seq.*

57. Outstanding questions regarding optants, property, etc., in Memel and other matters arising out of the Convention were regulated by an agreement between Germany and Lithuania signed in Berlin on February 10, 1925. League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. 42, p. 31 *et seq.*

58. Cf. League of Nations, *Official Journal*, 66th session of Council, January 25–February 20, 1932, Part II, p. 529 *et seq.*, p. 541 *et seq.*; Permanent Court of International Justice, Series A./B. Judgments, Orders and Advisory Opinions No. 49, *Judgment of the Statute of the Memel Territory*, August 11, 1932.

Directorate on the ground that it had encouraged or at least not prevented the rise in Memel of a Nazi movement hostile to Lithuanian sovereignty. Simultaneously, the two National Socialist parties in the territory were banned. An all-Lithuanian Directorate was appointed, which could not hope to secure the support of the Diet, which has a German majority. In order to overcome this difficulty the Lithuanian members absent themselves from every meeting of the Diet, and the remaining German members lack one of constituting a quorum. This situation is all the more serious since five other duly elected German deputies have been detained by the Lithuanian government in connection with the recent treason trial. In reality Memel is being governed by a Lithuanian dictatorship which is not in conformity with its statute. This dictatorship has seized the opportunity to decree that in all but one or two elementary schools the language of instruction is to be Lithuanian, which must also be the language in government departments, and it is reported that several hundred German state employees have been dismissed.⁵⁹

The Lithuanian government argues that it has been forced to adopt such extreme measures to prevent a Nazi coup in Memel and eventual re-annexation of the territory by the Reich. There were originally two National Socialist parties in Memel, but in July 1933 the Reich authorities unified them by recognizing as leader Dr. Ernst Neumann who had been trained at a Nazi school for leaders in the Reich. Storm Troops were organized and given secret military training in the Memel woods. East Prussian radio stations broadcast attacks on the Lithuanian government. The Memel Nazis, considering themselves an integral part of the Reich party, sought to establish a Nazi government in Memel entirely controlled and directed from Berlin, and, having thus "coordinated" the territory, eventually reunite it with Germany.⁶⁰

The measures taken by Lithuania to counteract Nazification of Memel were viewed in Berlin as unjustifiable suppression of the rights of the German Memellanders. On July 10, 1934 Foreign Minister von Neurath officially protested to the signatories of the Memel convention—Britain, France, Italy and Japan—complaining that Lithuania had violated the statute and demanding intervention by the signatory powers.⁶¹ The latter, however, took no immediate action and the British government, in

59. Cf. *The Times* (London), March 27, 1935.

60. A full account of Nazi activities in Memel as charged by the Lithuanians is contained in *The Case against Neumann, von Saas et al: Summary of the Bill of Indictment* (Kaunas, Spindulio Spaustuve, 1934). Cf. also *Current History*, November 1934, and February, March and May 1935.

61. *The Times* (London), July 12, 1934.

answer to a question, stated in the House of Commons that Germany's only legal rights in the matter (*locus standi*) derived from its membership in the League Council "to which body any complaints should properly be addressed."⁶²

Meanwhile, relations between Lithuania and Germany became increasingly strained. During 1934 the Lithuanian government arrested and imprisoned many Nazi Memellanders, charging them with treasonable propaganda against the Lithuanian state. One hundred and twenty-six Nazis were brought to trial on December 14 in Kaunas, the indictment against them openly accusing the Memel German Consulate General and the authorities on the German side of the frontier, including those in Königsberg and Berlin, of inspiring and financing organizations and individuals in Memel for an anti-Lithuanian insurrection which would recover Memel Territory for the Reich.⁶³ At the trial evidence is reported to have revealed that Nazi headquarters in Tilsit—directly across the Niemen river from Memel in East Prussia—had paid subsidies to Memel teachers, party organizations, the press and cultural societies. German credits were given to Nazi farmers and merchants in Memel, while the border was almost completely closed to Lithuanian products, the Tilsit Nazi paper stating: "Germany has broken off trade with Lithuania in order to force little Lithuania, which dared to oppress our German racial comrades in Memel Territory, to observe the simplest rules of international courtesy and to prepare Lithuania for willingness to come to terms, not to speak of her obligations to observe the Memel convention. Soon the Leader will be able to take the settlement of the Memel problem into his own hands."⁶⁴

The Kaunas trial dragged on all winter before a military tribunal, and a verdict was finally handed down on March 25, 1935, just at the time when the British Foreign Secretary, Sir John Simon, was in Berlin conferring with Chancellor Hitler. Four of the defendants were sentenced to death for murder, two to life imprisonment, while the four most prominent Nazi leaders received eight to twelve years in prison and confiscation of their property. An ex-president of the Memel Diet was sentenced

62. *Ibid.*, July 20, 1934.

63. *The Case against Neumann, von Sass et al: Summary of the Bill of Indictment*, cited; *The Times* (London), December 15, 1934. For a German view of the trial, cf. Reinhold Pregel, *Die Wahrheit über den Prozess gegen 126 Memelländer vor dem Kriegsgericht in Kovno* (Berlin, Verlag Grenze und Ausland, 1935); Otto Kredel, "Chronik des Memellandes seit 1918, der Leidensweg einer deutschen Mehrheit," *Zeitschrift für Politik*, April 1935.

64. *New York Times*, March 4, 1935.

to eight years in prison and seventy other defendants received shorter terms, from six years downwards. Between thirty and forty were acquitted.⁶⁵ The Lithuanian Supreme Court upheld the death sentences on appeal, although it reduced some of the prison terms. On May 18, however, the President of Lithuania commuted the death sentences to life imprisonment.⁶⁶

The verdict aroused a storm of fury in the Reich against the "political murders." Flaming protest meetings, carefully organized throughout Germany by the Nazi party and the League for Germanism Abroad, told the Memellanders: "You are no longer alone! The strong German spirit, a living, passionate experience of a new Germany of a hundred million people is with you . . ." In the press it was stated that "the demand of the German people on behalf of enslaved old Prussian Memel must ring: A free plebiscite to determine its state, cultural and political constitution."⁶⁷ Chancellor Hitler protested to Sir John Simon, demanding that the signatories to the Memel Convention intervene.

Great Britain, France and Italy sent a strong note to Lithuania on March 20, calling attention to the anomalies in the present situation and declaring firmly that Lithuania, whose difficulties are recognized, should insure the formation of a directorate and arrange for the Memel Diet to meet.⁶⁸ This démarche forecast reference of the dispute to the League and the Permanent Court in case Lithuania failed to fulfill its obligations under the Memel statute. The Lithuanian government, however, is reported to feel that it is at present impossible to restore normal conditions in Memel. The existing abnormal situation, they claim, is due entirely to Nazi propaganda for reunion with the Reich.⁶⁹

DANZIG

The attempted Nazification of Memel is paralleled by Nazi penetration in the Free City of Danzig, where the population is 95 per cent German. In Danzig, however, the Hitlerites have been hampered both by the new official policy of friendship between Poland and Germany and by the fact that the League of Nations guarantees Danzig's constitution and has a resident High Commissioner on the spot. Elections to the Danzig *Volkstag* (Assembly) on May 28, 1933 resulted in

65. *The Times* (London), March 27, 1935.

66. *New York Times*, May 18, 19, 1935.

67. *Der Zeitspiegel*, April 14, 1935.

68. *The Times* (London), April 25, 1935; *New York Times*, April 2, 1935.

69. *Journal de Genève*, May 7, 1935.

Nazi control of that body by a slight margin.⁷⁰ The Danzig Hitlerites, in close contact with the party authorities in Germany, introduced Nazi methods and principles—although they were unable to abolish all other parties and legally, at least, the position of the Jews remained unaltered. But establishment of a completely totalitarian state proved impossible, for essential changes in the Danzig constitution could have been effected only by a two-thirds Nazi majority of the *Volkstag*, plus the consent of the League Council.

The results of the Saar plebiscite encouraged the Danzig Nazis to believe that the time had come to set up a totalitarian state in the Free City and thus pave the way for eventual reunion with the Reich. Herr Greiser, the Nazi president of the Danzig Senate, assured the League Council in January 1935 that the National Socialist government of Danzig "had most scrupulously observed the letter and the spirit of the Free City's constitution, although it had been difficult to achieve, within the limits of that constitution, the aims desired by the very large majority of the inhabitants."⁷¹ Nevertheless, the Nazis felt that it was "intolerable to govern a state conscious that irresponsible elements who are enemies of that state may find a hearing and even support in important quarters while the government must be responsible in Geneva for the successful activities of these people."⁷² The Nazi authorities in Danzig consequently forced dissolution of the *Volkstag* on February 21, 1935, although its mandate still had two years to run. New elections were called for April 7, which were to prove to Geneva and the world that Danzig is completely National Socialist and thus give the Nazis a free hand in that territory.

The Danzig campaign was carried out with all the pageantry for which the party has been noted in the Reich. At its culmination most of the important Nazi spellbinders, including Hess, Goebbels, Goering and Streicher, addressed huge mass meetings; Storm Troopers paraded through streets hung with swastika banners. Despite the League High Commissioner, the opposition newspapers were suppressed and very few opposition assemblies managed to take place; no opposition placards were visible in the streets.⁷³ Dr. Goebbels, speaking on the eve of the poll, told the Danzigers: "We have broken the Versailles treaty! We have

torn off our shackles on the principle that whoever has the power gets the rights! As it was in the Saar so will it in all probability be in Danzig!"⁷⁴ Hess proclaimed that "Danzig is an outpost of Germanism," stating that the great question facing Danzig is "Do you want to coordinate yourself with your home, with Germany?" He cited the Saar as an example, and pointed to introduction of conscription in the Reich as National Socialism's greatest accomplishment.⁷⁵ Goering denounced the Socialists and the Catholics as international traitors, and stated: "Danzig must be the mirror of Germany; if it wants to be German, it must be National Socialist. The *Führer* calls to you on Sunday. You must follow. You must give the world the proof that Danzig is National Socialist because this gives the world the proof that Danzig is German."⁷⁶ Election posters, hung all over the Free City, proclaimed that "German Danzig votes National Socialist. There are Only Two Fronts: National Socialists and Separatists."⁷⁷ The stage was set for a repetition of the Saar victory.

The election passed off quietly on April 7. Although the Nazis gained five seats, the result fell far short of their expectations and they failed to achieve two-thirds control of the *Volkstag*. The Nazis gained 30,000 popular votes, comprising 59.17 per cent of the electorate, as compared with 50.9 per cent in May 1933. At the same time the Socialist and Catholic Center parties managed to hold their own and the small Polish vote slightly increased.⁷⁸

The Danzig vote cannot be interpreted as proof that the Free City is not essentially German, but it has given Hitler his first rebuff since he came to power. Many Danzigers appear to have reacted strongly against the Nazi charge that those who did not vote National Socialist were separatists; moreover, knowledge that no immediate return to the Reich could follow the elections doubtless emboldened Socialists and Catholics to support their own parties with less fear of reprisals. Since the election, however, Danzig Nazi officials have imprisoned Catholic priests charged with preaching "political sermons," and have banned the Socialist newspaper, *Volkstimme*, for five months.⁷⁹

Despite Nazi activity in Danzig, there have been few reports of attempted Nazification in the so-called Polish Corridor. The Polish-German non-

70. Shepard Stone, "German-Polish Disputes," *Foreign Policy Reports*, July 5, 1933.

71. League of Nations, *Official Journal*, February 1935, p. 139 *et seq.*

72. Statement made by Herr Greiser to the German press, *Der Zeitspiegel*, April 14, 1935.

73. *The Times* (London), April 5, 1935.

74. *New York Times*, April 7, 1935.

75. *Ibid.*, April 6, 1935.

76. *The Times* (London), April 5, 1935.

77. *New York Herald Tribune*, April 5, 1935.

78. *New York Times*, April 9, 1935.

79. *Volksischer Beobachter*, April 11, 1935.

aggression pact of January 26, 1934 and the subsequent agreement between the two countries to refrain from propaganda against each other's interests have apparently prevented an intensive Nazi campaign in the Corridor. The situation in Polish Upper Silesia also seems to have been relatively quiet.

On the other hand the Czechoslovak Republic, which has a German minority of three and a half million, banned growing German Nazi and Nationalist parties in the autumn of 1933. A new organization, the Sudeten German party, then sprang up under the leadership of Konrad Henlein which apparently cuts across the existing German parties in Czechoslovakia. In his speeches and public announcements of policy Henlein has expressed loyalty to the Czechoslovak state and to democratic principles, but the emergence of this new movement, which appeals to the sections of the population most susceptible to Fascism, has upset the existing balance among the Czech Germans,⁸⁰ who have been represented in the government at Prague since 1926.

At the general election on May 19, 1935 the Henlein party won 44 seats, polling the largest vote of any single party in the country. Although there are only 3,500,000 Germans in Czechoslovakia, Henlein's group rolled up 1,294,000 votes, surpassing even the total of the Czech Agrarian party. Henlein has continued to pay lip service to democracy but his movement is organized on the model of the German Nazis, makes use of the same slogans and is run on the leadership principle. Despite constant denials that the Czech Germans have received money and direction from Berlin, the emergence of this strong German party in democratic Czechoslovakia cannot fail to have important repercussions.⁸¹

SCHLESWIG

National Socialism, fostered and assisted from the Reich, has also raised its head on the German northern frontier—in the part of Danish Schleswig which was returned to Denmark in 1920 after a plebiscite to determine the wishes of the inhabitants. In this poll the Danes had received 74.2 per cent of the votes cast in the northern zone of the

80. Cf. "Les Allemands de Tchécoslovaquie et les prochaines élections," *L'Europe Centrale*, February 16, 1935, p. 98 *et seq.*

81. *New York Times*, May 20, 21, 1935.

82. 101,624 votes, comprising 91.5 per cent of the registered voters, were cast in this part of the plebiscite. 75,431 voted for Denmark and 25,329 for Germany. For complete history and analysis of the Schleswig plebiscite, cf. Sarah Wambaugh, *Plebiscites since the World War* (Washington, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1933, 2 vols.), Vol. I, p. 46 *et seq.*

province.⁸² In the so-called second, or southern, zone of Schleswig, however, where the plebiscite was held some weeks later, the Germans received 79 per cent of the total vote.⁸³ The northern zone was consequently awarded to Denmark and the southern to Germany.

Until Hitler's accession to power little or nothing was heard of the small German minority in Danish Schleswig.⁸⁴ This minority is said to have possessed complete cultural and spiritual freedom, the German schools being supported by the Danish state. With the advent of National Socialism, however, German nationalism became strong. Money as well as Nazi propaganda flowed from the other side of the frontier into Denmark, while the Schleswig farmers found the German border closed to many of their products. Unrest developed and the Danish population of South Jutland became nervous, fearing border incidents; a Danish organization was formed to combat the growth of National Socialism. By the end of 1933 it was charged that special military and naval Storm Troop detachments numbering between 4,000 and 5,000 men had been organized in Denmark, although the Danish government had banned the wearing of uniforms by private organizations. On January 1, 1934 the Danish government announced its intention of prohibiting the formation of Storm Troops and the Nazi private army was promptly reorganized as a new unit called the *Schleswigsche Kameradschaft* (Schleswig Comrades). Meanwhile Nazi agitators continued to demand a new delimitation of the Danish-German frontier and the return of all Germans to the Reich.⁸⁵

German propaganda has continued despite Danish efforts to check it, and feeling remains tense between Danes and Germans. The latter have bought up considerable property along the frontier, and the German schools in the province, although supported by the Danish government, have become hotbeds of pro-Nazi, anti-Danish sentiment.⁸⁶

83. There were 70,988 registered voters, of whom 90.6 per cent voted. Germany received 51,724 votes and Denmark 12,800. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 86.

84. In 1932, when the largest number of German votes was polled in an election to the Danish *Rigsdag*, it comprised 13.2 per cent of the total vote cast. Cf. Wambaugh, *Plebiscites since the World War*, cited, p. 98, footnote. According to a statement made by the Danish Prime Minister Stauning in October 1933, the German minority formed 18 per cent of the population in South Jutland (Danish Schleswig). *New York Times*, October 16, 1933.

85. Cf. *New York Times*, October 16, December 30, 1933, January 2, 1934; *The Times* (London), November 14, 20, December 29, 1933; *Le Temps* (Paris), November 23, 1933, January 9, 1934; *New York Herald Tribune*, January 25, 1934; *Christian Science Monitor*, January 25, 1934.

86. *Le Temps* (Paris), March 24, April 8, 16, 1935.

THE COLONIES

Although Hitler, according to *Mein Kampf*, was formerly not interested in the acquisition of colonial territory, the Reich has recently demanded return of its former colonies, all of which are now mandated areas under the protection of the League of Nations.⁸⁷ Dr. Schacht—always an ardent exponent of colonial development—declared at the Leipzig Trade Fair on March 4, 1935 that colonial raw material territories were indispensable to an industrial nation. Stating that he was speaking with the “absolute support of the Leader,” Dr. Schacht said that if Germany had its colonies today, the transfer problem would be infinitely simpler.⁸⁸ Some weeks later Hitler himself told the British Foreign Secretary that the Reich considered itself in a position of inferiority as long as it had no colonies.⁸⁹ Whether or not colonies would ease German economic difficulties, a reapportionment of the present mandated areas would have a beneficial psychological effect in the Reich, for it would wipe out the stigma of colonial maladministration which still rankles in every German breast. The former German colonies, however, are administered by the various mandatory powers under supervision of the League of Nations “as a sacred trust of civilization,” and Germany’s colonial demands are complicated by Nazi racial theories.

CONCLUSION

The Third Reich has now regained its “military sovereignty” by unilateral action and is fast building up a large army, navy and air force, but is still officially observing the treaty provisions regarding the demilitarized zone of the Rhineland which is further guaranteed by the Locarno pacts.⁹⁰ On April 18, 1935, after the Stresa conference, Britain and Italy informed Germany that they would respect their Locarno guarantee obligations and come to the assistance of the Reich if it is the victim of aggression in the west. At the same time they warned Hitler that they would regard any violation of the demilitarized zone as a breach of Locarno, which in effect means that German rearmament in the Rhineland would be met by col-

87. The former German colonies now comprise the following mandated territories: the Cameroons—divided between France and Great Britain; Ruandi-Urundi—Belgium; Tanganyika—Great Britain; Togoland—divided between France and Great Britain; Southwest Africa—Union of South Africa; Islands of the Pacific—north of the equator, Japan; Nauru, Great Britain, with responsibility shared by New Zealand and Australia; New Guinea, Australia; Western Samoa, New Zealand.

88. *Volkskischer Beobachter*, March 5, 1935.

89. Cf. p. 72.

90. Articles 42, 43 and 44 of the Versailles treaty.

lective action against the Reich. In his speech on May 22, however, Hitler reconfirmed the Reich’s intention to respect its Locarno obligations.⁹¹

The Versailles treaty also provided that no fortifications should be erected by Germany in the Schleswig area.⁹² The Reich was forbidden to install any guns commanding the maritime routes between the North Sea and the Baltic, and existing fortifications had to be demolished. The Kiel canal was made an international waterway.⁹³ Recent reports, however, indicate intensive German military activity in this Schleswig demilitarized zone. The submarine school at Kiel has been reopened, and it is asserted that the former powerful German naval base there is being completely reconstructed. The German island of Sylt in the North Sea has apparently been turned into a strongly fortified military and naval air base.⁹⁴ All these developments are in direct violation of the Versailles treaty.

Long before the Reich undertook modification of the peace treaty by unilateral action, many changes had been made in the Versailles settlement. Thus the one-sided economic restrictions imposed on Germany lapsed in 1925 in accordance with the terms of the treaty. In September 1926 the Reich became a member of the League of Nations with a permanent seat on the Council; the Inter-Allied Military Control Commission was withdrawn from the Reich on January 31, 1927, when supervision of German disarmament was transferred to the League Council. The Rhineland was completely evacuated in June 1930—five years before the date specified in the treaty; and the reparation problem was settled in June 1932, when the Lausanne Conference to all intents and purposes abolished reparation payments from the Reich. Finally, the Saar was returned to Germany on March 1, 1935 after a plebiscite held in accordance with the provisions of the Versailles treaty.

Nazi demands for further revision of that treaty comprise solemn abrogation of the war guilt clause (Article 231) which, the Germans contend, places the entire blame for the World War on Germany and its allies; return of the former German colonies as a sign of restoration of complete equality, and revision of the territorial settlement of 1919. This includes Memel, Eupen-Malmédy, Schleswig and

91. Cf. p. 72.

92. This comprises the area between latitude 55° 27' N. and 54° 00' N. and longitude 9° 00' E. and 16° 00' E. (Article 195).

93. Article 380. The international character of the Kiel Canal was confirmed by the Permanent Court of International Justice in its judgment in the Wimbledon case delivered on August 17, 1923. Cf. Permanent Court of International Justice, Series A. *Judgments and Orders*, No. 1 (A. W. Sijthoff’s Publishing Co., Leyden).

94. *New York Times*, May 12, 1935.

Danzig, as well as the so-called Polish Corridor and Polish Upper Silesia, although in the two latter cases German agitation has become much less vocal since conclusion of the Polish-German treaty of friendship in January 1934. Nor have the Nazis insisted on the return of Alsace-Lorraine, where Hitler is estopped by the Locarno guarantees. Nazi demands, however, go much further than rectification of the Versailles frontiers, comprising claims to territory and peoples which never formed part of the German Empire.

In accordance with these demands, Germans on the frontiers of the Reich are undergoing an intensive process of Nazification which appears in large measure to be directed, assisted and even financed from Berlin, and is being carried out regardless of whether the border Germans in question were ever attached to the German Empire. The aggressiveness of the new policy and the terroristic methods employed have caused great uneasiness and tension in Europe. It is feared that the rearmed Third Reich, despite Hitler's numerous protestations of peace, will not hesitate to "rectify its frontiers" especially in the northeast and south—if necessary by force—as soon as it feels strong enough to withstand any possible consequences of such action.

Before the advent of Hitler, a growing section of international opinion was becoming convinced that some of the worst aspects of the 1919-1920 territorial settlement must be revised. Hitler's unilateral abrogation of the military clauses of the treaty, however, and the Nazification activities beyond the German frontiers which square with his policy as laid down in *Mein Kampf*, make more difficult resort to Article XIX of the League Covenant providing for "reconsideration of treaties which have become inapplicable." Some European observers argue that *Mein Kampf* should not be taken seriously now that Hitler has achieved power, and contend that territorial concessions would satisfy the Nazis and lead to moderation of German foreign policy. Others, however, fear that any concessions made to the Nazis would merely whet their appetite, and that minor territorial changes such as the return of Memel and Eupen-Malmédy—where the Reich undoubtedly has strong claims—would not satisfy Nazi opinion nurtured on *Mein Kampf*. Nor would rectification of the German frontiers or even return of the colonies meas-

urably improve the growing economic distress of the Reich even if the immediate psychological effects were salutary. German prosperity depends in the last analysis on the Reich's foreign trade which has broken down both as a result of the world depression and of Germany's domestic financial policies.

The attitude of the Third Reich toward peace or war must also be viewed in connection with its internal political situation, for Hitler's sudden reintroduction of conscription was undoubtedly motivated in large measure by domestic considerations. Universal service solves the problem of the Storm Troops and settles the long-standing jealousy between the Nazi private army and the *Reichswehr* which became public in the June 30 blood purge. The disappearance of the Storm Troops has been greeted with relief by large sections of the German people who prefer the discipline and strictly controlled movements of the regular army to the often irresponsible and overbearing actions of the Storm Troops. But above all, conscription is viewed as a restoration of German national honor. For the moment at least Hitler's action not only raises his prestige at home but gives the government endless new opportunities for the mass spectacles and parades which are necessary to occupy a people whose standard of living is rapidly deteriorating.

Although the stability of the Nazi régime seems unquestioned, German economic difficulties are increasing as evidenced by Hitler's speech on May 21. Germany, therefore, must have peace at present. Yet it is conceivable that unrest at home might eventually lead Hitler to consider it necessary to stake everything on aggressive action abroad in order to maintain his power. The army, however, has become in fact the sole bearer of arms in the Third Reich, occupying a supreme position which is underlined by the fact that German soldiers now owe primary allegiance to the army and not to the National Socialist party. The army will probably use its augmented influence, for the present at least, to prevent adventures abroad. The *Reichswehr* generals, still smarting from the humiliation of a lost war, would probably resort to extreme measures to avoid another unless convinced that Germany stood a good chance to win. The size and strength of the coalition opposed to possible German aggression may therefore prove a decisive factor in their calculations.